

**FIRST REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP TO REVIEW THE NEED FOR AND POSSIBLE
STRUCTURE OF AN INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION TO REPRESENT OLYMPIC
COLLECTORS**

David Maiden

INTRODUCTION:

This Report reflects the structure of the Working Groups discussions held on 4 and 5 April 2011, during which some fundamental questions/issues were identified and answers/potential solutions provided. Each section of this Report represents a question/issue and our response.

1. The Need: Is there a need for an international organisation to represent Olympic collectors?

1.1 It is desirable to have an international organisation to represent Olympic collectors.

A number of benefits in having such an organisation were identified for the various stakeholders involved:

(a) Individual collectors.

- recognition and status
- information on developments world-wide
- access to study groups
- exclusive souvenirs
- reference material
- potential to exhibit/compete
- social networking

(b) Olympic Collectors' Associations.

- official recognition by the IOC
- information on developments world-wide
- reference material
- maintenance of relationship with NOC

(c) IOC.

- single point of contact, ease of access to expert advice
- helps promote the Olympic Movement
- helps promote the market for licensed collectibles

(d) Producers of Collectibles.

- helps promote market for licensed collectibles
- source of market advice

2. Should the organisation represent only Olympic philatelists or Olympic collectors generally?

2.1 The Working Group noted that the review was being undertaken against the background of the proposed dissolution of FIPO and the question of whether something should replace that organisation. However, it noted that:

- There had formerly been counterpart organisations to FIPO in the numismatic (FINO) and memorabilia (FIMO) fields;
- The membership of a number of Olympic collector organisations already successfully included all three areas of collecting, not only philately;
- Interest in memorabilia collecting was growing at a time when interest in philately was stable or declining;
- Open Class exhibiting allowed for a “cross-over” between philately and other forms of collecting.

2.2 Three options were identified:

- (a) restrict a new organisation to philately only;
- (b) create a new organisation initially with a philatelic focus, but with the objective of moving towards a broader base of membership;
- (c) create a new organisation which covered all forms of Olympic collecting.

2.3 The Working Group did not support Option (a), restricting the new organisation to philately. Benefits were seen in combining all fields of Olympic collecting together within the one organisation, and there was discussion about the speed with which this might be achieved, either gradually or in one step. The majority of the Working Group favoured Option (c), a single step.

2.4 The Working Group recommends the establishment of a single organisation to represent all fields of Olympic collecting internationally. The name, *Federation Internationale Collectionneurs Olympique* (FICO) was considered.

3. What should be the Mission/Aims of Such an Organisation?

3.1 A Mission Statement for a new organisation is proposed:

To provide a centre of excellence for understanding and promoting the historic and cultural aspects of the Olympic Movement through collectibles.

3.2 Consistent with the Mission Statement, the following aims and activities were identified:

- To promote learning and friendship between Olympic collectors the world over;
- To share knowledge about Olympic stamps, coins and memorabilia for the benefit of all members;
- To facilitate access to Olympic reference material;
- To produce publications;
- To collaborate with the IOC in spreading the Olympic ideal;
- To provide international focus for Olympic collectors world-wide;
- To encourage and collaborate with the organisers of exhibitions/fairs of Olympic collectibles.

3.3 Communication is a fundamental part of the Mission and the aims/activities identified. The key to achieving the Mission and successfully undertaking the desired activities is the use of the internet. The Working Group sees the establishment of a web page as the most cost-effective means of receiving and distributing information.

4. What should be the Basis of Membership-Individual Collectors or Associations of Collectors?

4.1 The Working Group recommends that members be national associations of Olympic collectors, whether specialising in one of the fields of collecting only, or covering members in several fields of collecting. There could be one or several members from a given nation, e.g. in the USA, the Sports Philatelists International and the Olympin Club could be members, while in France it would be AFCOS.

4.2 There would be criteria and a process for assessing applications by associations for membership of FICO. All existing FIPO affiliates would be invited to apply for membership and must meet the standard criteria for membership. Other Olympic collector organisations not currently members of FIPO which *prima facie* meet the criteria would be invited to apply and their applications assessed against the criteria. Key elements of the membership criteria would be that the association has a legal identity, a board of management of at least three members, a record of activity in Olympic collecting, and the local NOC must have no objection. Membership applicants could be placed on probation for two years, as Affiliates, with all membership rights except voting during the probation period.

4.3 If there is no national association of Olympic collectors in a particular nation, an individual collector can still be part of the new organisation by joining one of the several nationally based Olympic collector associations that operate internationally e.g. Society of Olympic Collectors, Sports Philatelists International, IMOS.

5. What would be the Management Structure of the Organisation?

5.1 The new organisation should have a Board of five (5) members:

- President
- 2x Vice Presidents
- Treasurer
- All the above elected by the membership, and
- An IOC Nominee.

5.2. Depending upon availability of funding, a person may be employed to perform administrative tasks, and manage the office on a day-to-day basis, but this person would have no executive authority.

5.3 Subject to 6.3 below, Board members would be elected for a period of four years.

5.4 A quorum for the Board is three members, and Board decisions will be valid when approved by a majority.

6. How Would the Board be Elected?

6.1 Voting would be on the basis that each member association has one vote; the same principle as applies in the Olympic Movement.

6.2 Elections would be for Board membership and, once elected, the Board members would elect the specific office-holders.

6.3 Elections would be conducted every two years at a General Assembly. With the exception of the first election, Board members would be elected for four years. At the initial election, two Board members would be elected for four years and two Board members for two years, in order to provide for regular rotation while at the same time ensuring continuity.

6.4 Elections would be conducted by votes cast personally at a General Assembly meeting, and by postal/electronic vote for those unable to attend.

6.5 Votes will be valid if a quorum of 50% +1 has participated.

7. How Could the Constitution be Changed?

7.1 The Constitution could be changed only by decision of the General Assembly. Any proposed changes to be sent to the secretariat six months prior to the General Assembly. A vote at a General Assembly will be valid if 50%+1 of the members participate.

8. Under Which Law Would a FICO Operate?

8.1 To ensure close collaboration with the Olympic Movement and IOC, the new organisation should be established under Swiss law and have its registered office in Lausanne.

9. What would be the potential revenue?

9.1 The Working Group identified the following potential sources of revenue/resources to fund its operations:

- Membership fees
- Sales of souvenirs
- Grants from IOC
- Support from sponsors and NOCs

9.2 Membership fees on a sliding scale, according to size (number of individual members) of each member association, are proposed. An example of such a fee scale is:

Number of Individual members	Annual Fee (euro) per association
3-20	50
21-50	100
51-100	140
101-200	260
201+	320

It is estimated this scale of fees would produce an income of approximately 3000 euro p.a.. Member associations would raise the funds from fees paid by their own individual members.

9.3 If the new organisation was formally recognised by the IOC, there would be the opportunity to produce special souvenirs bearing Olympic marks which could be sold to raise revenue or given to individual members of member associations to recognise increased membership fees.

9.4 Grants from the IOC could be sought for specific purposes, such as provision of administrative support, establishment of a web site, production of a publication, holding a seminar, etc.

10. What are the Potential Costs?

10.1 The costs depend on the level of activity undertaken. The Working Group identified three broad levels of operation:

(a) Minimum/Basic: where the organisation exists and relies exclusively on volunteer resources. This achieves formal recognition and status but the organisation would be unable to do more than very basic communication via a web site. It is estimated this would cost approximately 3000 euro p.a.

(b) Medium Level: where the organisation conducts a web site as an active focal point for two-way communication between all member associations. This would require employment, on a part-time basis, of an administrative person and web site operational costs. It is estimated this would cost an additional 18,000 euro above the minimum level.

(c) High Level: where the organisation conducts the activities in (a) and (b) plus undertakes a publications programme and conducts other activities such as exhibitions/seminars. etc. The costs would vary with the type of activity undertaken.

11. What Would be the Relationship With the IOC?:

11.1 For a new organisation to be effective it needs to be formally recognised by the IOC, in a similar manner to which the Society of Olympic Historians is recognised.

11.2 Formal recognition would involve a documented agreement which sets out the rights and obligations of each party. This might include the right to use Olympic marks in certain clearly defined circumstances. It might also include the right (on a no-obligation basis) of FICO to apply for specific purpose grants from the IOC.

12. Next Steps?

12.1 The Working Group is seeking the views, by 31 August, of existing FIPO members, and of other Olympic collecting associations, vis-à-vis this Report. It will also seek the views of the IOC Philately, Numismatic and Memorabilia Commission (Collectors' Commission).

12.2 These views will be considered by the Working Group and, where appropriate, the Report amended to reflect them. This should be completed by October 2011.

12.3 By December 2011, a Final Report will be sent to the IOC.

12.4 The objective is to have collector organisations vote on the new statutes and the election of office-holders within the first half of 2012.

Jean Pierre Picquot

Roman Babut

Robert Farley

Thomas Lippert

Mark Maestrone